105, 113, 131, 142, 157, 161, 177, 262, 291, 302, 304, 721, Apayao OA5

[For information on location, physical type, personality, population, acculturation, diet, clothing, toilet, tatooing and headhunting, see 58: Barton, OA1 Philippines, category 116, pp. 300-301.]

42: Vanoverbergh E-5 (no date) 1936-1938 OA1 Philippines
Apayao OA5
Isneg

The laziness of the Isneg man has become almost proverbial in Apayaw; he resents it of course, but what can be done about it? The Isneg are living in one of the richest provinces of the Philippines agriculturally, and nevertheless these last years, famine has desolated the land at every turn.

Once while at Alumani, I went to visit a few friends: three of them, the father and his two sturdy sons, the older one a widower, the younger one a bachelor, were living together in a house surrounded by the most fertile fields imaginable; and still they complained and said that they were starving to death, because there were no women to till the soil.

The year 1928 was a lean one almost all over the province, but Karagawan men preferred to squat down in their houses and feed on the flowers of the coconut tree rather than come to Kabugaw and earn a ganta (three liters) of rice a day by doing work that could easily be done by boys of twelve years of age: this work was too hard for them.

About the same time I had to go to Bayag, which is some forty miles distant from Kabugaw, a two days' walk. I sent my carriers one day ahead and gave them rations of rice for two days, in order to preclude any excuse for their not reaching their destination at least at the same time as myself. The next day I met the fellows about noon, sitting in a little hut some ten miles from home and cooking their last meal but one. Having rice they did not care for anything else. They had passed a day and a half walking ten miles, cooking rice, chewing betel nut, and . . . resting.

I could adduce a score of examples like this, all from personal experience. But after all why should we blame the Isneg for it? They were reared in years of plenty, when the smallest amount of work brought the largest possible returns; at the beginning of the lean years they consumed all the rice that had been hoarded up for years; and now the hard times have come: when a tree has been growing in a slanting direction for several years, can you make it lean to the other side in its old age? The Bontok Igorot is industrious and always ready to handle a job that may bring him some money; but he is living among rocks and cliffs, where even weeds and grasses refuse to thrive. The Isneg on the contrary are living in an exceedingly fertile country: up to recent times their district was closed to the outside world for lack of roads, and this prevented them from conducting active trade on any large scale and from selling the surplus

42: Vanoverbergh E-5 (no date) 1936-1938 OA1 Philippines
Apayao OA5
Isneg

The children are usually afraid of the spirits, who are legion, and some of whom might be called bugaboos of one kind or another, but threats of these beings or of ghosts are never resorted to in order to frighten the youngsters into good conduct, except again in the first two cases just mentioned.

To the Isneg future life is simply a continuation of the present one, except for a few differentiating details, as living in a silver house and so on. A man, whether good or bad, continues his daily life, like in a dream, at the other side of the tomb, just as if nothing had happened. The difference that exists between the interred body of a good man and that of a bad one, which will be explained in due time, can have only very little influence on the conduct of men here on earth; and besides, there also the question of shame is of paramount importance, no less than among the living, as will be seen later on.

Consequently practically every article of the socio-moral code gets its sanction from non-religious or natural motives. Shame is the most often resorted to, shame that results from the known violation of any point of the moral code, shame that affects not only the delinquent, but also his parents. "Do not do that lest your parents be shamed" is a phrase very commonly used in order to persuade the child to conduct itself well. The terms "shame (*aliyáw*)", "shameful (*nakal-aliyáw*)", "ashamed (*maliyáw*)", are almost continually on the Isneg's lips; they serve both as an excuse for negligence in complying with one's duties, and as a motive for good behavior. Nothing is more powerful than the fear of being shamed in order to cause an Isneg either to live honorably or to commit a dastardly crime. An Isneg is exceedingly sensitive to shameful and opprobrious epithets; he will do anything to avoid any of them being thrown at his head, and he resents it very much if he is accused undeservedly. Lest he be called a coward, an Isneg will sustain a quarrel indefinitely, whether he be on the right side or not. Shame is the biggest incentive for young people to behave and to keep themselves from indulging in all too flagrant transgressions of the moral code, especially with reference to sex morality. An Isneg child will be taught to be obedient and respectful toward its parents, lest the latter be shamed on account of its unruly conduct. Honesty and truthfulness have to be practised lest a man be branded as a thief or a liar, which are exceedingly opprobrious terms in the mouth of a native. In short, the fear of shame keeps the Isneg on the right path in a thousand instances; and any kind of privation or hardship will be suffered patiently, the

44: Vanoverbergh E-5 (no date) 1941 OA1 Philippines
Apayao OA5
Isneg

of the soil that are cultivated among the Isneg. This little treatise on Isneg agriculture might have been written by a native, as I try to put myself as much as possible in the place of the Isneg.

I. Isneg Farming in General

It is freely stated all over Apayaw that, in former times, rice was always abundant in each and every village. Not to have old rice (*kópag*) in store, meaning "rice that had been reaped one or more years previously",[1] was the exception rather than the rule; and there were always in existence a goodly number of granaries where rice was kept that had been harvested up to four years back.

A famine (*dasmág* or *uldt*), under the circumstances, might be called an unknown entity, were it not that *dasmág* and *uldt* are genuine Isneg terms, and so that the thing they refer to must have made its appearance at least occasionally. Actually, however, every few years one hears about a famine devastating the land and bringing in its wake a tremendous amount of distress and misery. The children, of course, are usually the most to be pitied, as they are liable to be permanently affected by the lack of sufficient nourishment.

It might be objected that Apayaw is a rich agricultural country, that it is covered with vegetation throughout the year, that rice is not the only crop that can be raised with advantage, that there is an abundance of tropical forests containing plenty of trees and plants of which one or more parts are edible, and consequently that starvation must be impossible. To this I must answer that the cause is not to be found in the soil or in the climatic conditions of the country, but in the character of its inhabitants. The Isneg is easily dejected, he cannot stand adversity; if his ordinary means of sustenance fail, he is at a loss what to do, he just sits down and moons. Even when remunerative work is offered to him, an Isneg who has not the usual amount of rice at his disposal has rarely the courage to perform it: he is simply down.

Fortunately the average Isneg woman shows herself much more courageous, and, where her husband proves a dismal failure, she it

[1] Rice that has been kept for one or two years, because its owners, being in mourning for a dead child, abstained from eating it, is called *disínag*. In native words occurring in the present paper the accent (') is placed over the accented vowel. Accented n (ń) denotes the ng sound in English "bring". For full phonetic key, see M. Vanoverbergh. The Isneg, Publ. Cath. Anthrop. Conf., 1932, v. 3, no. 1, pp. 3-4.

44: Vanoverbergh E-5 (no date) 1941 OA1 Philippines
Apayao OA5
Ineg

is who finds a means to keep the wolf from the door. On occasions like these, it is clearly apparent how training and experience have rendered the Isneg girl fit for meeting almost any kind of emergency, while the customary indolence of the male makes him an easy prey to downheartedness, so much so that he becomes utterly unable to save himself and his family from the pangs of hunger.

If we come to consider the situation from the point of view of the Isneg, it is not to be wondered at that nowadays famines are of rather frequent occurrence in Apayaw. Indeed, foreign authorities have invaded the land: not understanding the position of the Isneg with reference to the tutelary spirits of the country, they have all but extirpated headhunting. What can be expected after this? Being denied their usual offerings, the spirits stop protecting the crops. It is true that the Isneg does not cease to propitiate them by all possible means, but the great sacrifice has been rendered almost impossible, and so the fields have become a prey to evil imps, while the protectors of the rice, the purveyors of the Isneg, have become either powerless or indifferent.

Nevertheless, under ordinary circumstances, the average Isneg raises enough rice to last him and his family for a year. He may not be able to store it up for future consumption, but what he has usually keeps him alive from one harvest to the next, and besides almost always allows him to offer an occasional sacrifice to the spirits and to invite his relatives and neighbors to the ceremony. Such is the normal state of affairs with the great majority of the people.

Now in almost every agglomeration one will find at least one man who is styled "rich" (*ba-nán*), a man who raises rice in abundance (*aragammáy*) and consequently is able to offer one or more solemn sacrifices every year and to provide food to the inhabitants of several villages for days at a time. However, these so-called rich people do not fare any better than the average citizen, as their surplus is easily consumed at their *sáy-ám* or solemn sacrifices.

On the other hand, there are always a few who may be called poor (*nakimrút*): their rice, if they raise any at all, never lasts them the whole year round, and, in the meanwhile, they have to content themselves with Indian corn, yams, taro and the rest; but only in times of famine, are they obliged to feed on coconut flowers and other outlandish foods. Others again seem never to be able to make both ends meet: these are the *síbud*; their rice, which should be sufficient for ordinary persons, is usually gone almost before they are aware of it,

181 or if they
152 acquire money unfairly and buy rice with it, the rice,
157 when eaten, will give them no strength. As born psy-
[577 chologists, they enjoy working on you so that you will
827] think and act as they desire. They like a practical
[522] joke even when it is on themselves. In fact, even accidents are taken as jokes and the one who has been injured is the one who laughs the hardest. When going through hardship, they show real endurance. Their code is to laugh and joke near the end just as if they had only awakened from a good sleep.

181 The Apayaos are courageous and lovers of free-
175 dom. The Spaniards never did conquer them, and even we Americans had a difficult time establishing our benevolent government. It was necessary to continue the military control for many years; and only in 1923 was civil government established. During the first part of the Japanese occupation, Apayao was a place of refuge for fleeing Americans and, after the fall of Corregidor, Cabugao was made the headquarters of the USAFFE of Northern Luzon. The Japanese did not establish themselves here in these mountain fastnesses until March, 1943. They did not find the people at all willing to collaborate and left in August, 1944. When the Americans returned, the Apayaos volunteered, almost to a man, to assist in defeating the Japanese. Many acted as "bolo men" without pay, and served as cargados, messengers and laborers. Thus they neglected even their farming, so that this year their crops are small.

101 These people call themselves *Isnegs* and are so known by the neighboring *Ibanags*, whose language is related to theirs. Probably they are called Apa-

226 Sometimes the fish are poisoned with tobacco
[827] or the juice derived from the berries of the *tuba* bush. Also several types of fish traps are used.

224 Deer and wild pigs are hunted with dogs. Wild pigs are also trapped in their runways. The meat thus obtained is divided with fellow hunters and among neighbors. The hunting technique is quite communistic.

SOCIETY

621 The government of the Apayaos is simple. In
622 each family the man rules supreme and orders his wo-
[595] man what to do. This is the unit.

[361] A group of from 15 to 30 families build their houses near each other, *babalay*, being joined together for mutual aid and protection under one head man,
[557] *maingel*, who holds his position because he is the na-
[554] tural leader, is wealthy, and is the stongest and fiercest
622 warrior. The *maingel* wears a red turban on his head
624 and his arms are tattooed to the shoulders. He is absolute ruler; but has several advisory assistants, *pangmarwan*, who likewise have won their position through ability. The next best man to the *maingel*, is his number one assistant and so on. The common man may advise a *pangmarwan*. Upon the death of the *maingel* the number one *pangmarwan* takes his place.
627 The *maingel* and *pangmarwans* sit as a court to judge
692 any one who has broken the common law. Disputes between individuals are settled by intermediary peace
681 makers. It is notable that the fines are not paid to the government, but to the injured party, who receives the suitable indemnity. This may be in the form of jars, beads, animals, and other valuables.